United Nations A/C.1/70/L.59

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
5 November 2015

Original: English

Seventieth session
First Committee
Agenda items 92 and 134

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

I. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of governmental experts, to be established in 2016 on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, taking into account the assessments and recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, to continue to study, with a view to promoting common understandings, existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them, and how international law applies to the use of information and communications technologies by States, as well as norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour of States, confidence-building measures and capacity-building, and the concepts referred to in operative paragraph 3 of the resolution, and to submit a report on the results of the study to the Assembly at its seventy-second session.

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II. Relationship of the proposed requests to the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2016-2017 and to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

2. The requested activities referred to in the draft resolution relate to programme 1, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and programme 3, Disarmament, of the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2016-2017 (see A/69/6/Rev.1) and section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/70/6 (Sect. 2) and A/70/6 (Sect. 4), respectively).

III. Activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented

3. Pursuant to operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, the Office for Disarmament Affairs would provide the substantive services necessary for the convening of the group of governmental experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security.

4. The very high level of interest from Member States and the limited number of available seats (25 members) falls short of the wide demand for the group to be more inclusive. Accordingly, those Member States selected to participate in the group would be encouraged to engage in outreach with non-participating Member States within relevant regional and/or political groupings through modalities to be determined by each group in order to represent their interests and share information.

5. Accordingly, it is envisaged that the group would hold four sessions: two in 2016 (first in New York and then in Geneva) and two in 2017 (in Geneva and then in New York). Each would last for five days, for a total of 40 meetings over the two years.

6. Those meetings would require interpretation in the six official languages of the United Nations and would constitute an addition to the meetings workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in 2016 and 2017. The dates would be set in consultation with the Department.

7. Furthermore, the request for documentation contained in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution would constitute an addition to the documentation workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of one pre-session document (3,000 words) and two post-session documents (11,000 words) in the six official languages in 2016 and two post-session documents (15,500 words) in those languages in 2017.

IV. Modifications required in the programme of work and the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

8. To meet the provisions of the draft resolution, the outputs under section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 would need to be amended in respect of the information and outreach activities during the implementation of the budget, as follows:

Paragraph 4.58

Under "(a) Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies (regular budget and extrabudgetary)", add:

"(iv) General Assembly: group of governmental experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security:

a. Substantive servicing of meetings: 40 (20 in 2016 and 20 in 2017);

b. Parliamentary documentation: final report of the group (1);"

V. Financial implications of the proposals

A. Conference-servicing requirements

9. To implement the additional workload, there would be additional conference-servicing requirements of $565,500 for the biennium 2016-2017 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. The details of these additional non-recurrent requirements are provided in table 1.

Table 1
Additional requirements for the biennium 2016-2017
(United States dollars)

	2016	*2017*	*Total*
Interpretation	195 400	195 400	390 800
Pre-session documentation	18 000	–	18 000
Post-session documentation	64 300	92 400	156 700
Total	**277 700**	**287 800**	**565 500**

B. Non-conference-servicing requirements

10. It is estimated that a total amount of $764,000 would be required under section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 to cover the amount of $714,000 for the travel costs, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses of the experts and the secretary of the group to attend the meetings and the amount of $50,000 for the costs of the services and related travel of a consultant to provide technical and substantive support to the Office for Disarmament Affairs in connection with the preparations for and substantive servicing of the work of the group. The details of these additional non-recurrent requirements are provided in table 2.

Table 2
Additional requirements for the biennium 2016-2017
(United States dollars)

	2016	*2017*	*Total*
Consultants	25 000	25 000	50 000
Ad hoc expert groups	357 000	357 000	714 000
Total	**382 000**	**382 000**	**764 000**

11. A summary of all requirements is provided in table 3.

Table 3
Summary of additional non-recurrent resource requirements
(United States dollars)

Budget section	*2016*	*2017*	*Total*
2 General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management	277 700	287 800	565 500
4 Disarmament	382 000	382 000	764 000
Total	**659 700**	**669 800**	**1 329 500**

VI. Potential for absorption during the biennium 2016-2017

12. No provisions have been made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 for the implementation of the activities requested in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution. At the current stage, it is not possible to identify activities within the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium. It is therefore necessary that the additional resources in the amount of $1,329,500 be provided through an additional appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017.

VII. Contingency fund

13. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures were proposed that exceeded the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned would be implemented only through the redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or the modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities would have to be deferred to a later biennium.

VIII. Conclusion and action required of the General Assembly

14. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45, additional resource requirements in the amount of $1,329,500 would arise, comprising $565,500 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and $764,000 under section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. The amount of $1,329,500 would require an additional appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017 to be approved by the Assembly and, as such, would represent a charge against the contingency fund.